

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 SS-15 ONY-00 /030 R

DRAFTED BY EA/VLC:FZBROWN/FMLC
APPROVED BY EA:ROAKLEY
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O 232039Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SEOUL

S E C R E T STATE 131014

STADIS////////////////////////////////////
FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE ONLY FROM OAKLEY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, US, VM

SUBJECT: EISENBERG VISIT TO HANOI

1. SHOUL EISENBERG, PRESIDENT OF EISENBERG CO., LTD.,
BASED IN TEL AVIV AND LONDON, CALLED ON EA/VLC FOR THIRD
TIME IN RECENT MONTHS TO REPORT ON HIS EIGHT DAY BUSINESS
VISIT TO VIETNAM MAY 4-12. EISENBERG'S PARTY OF 30 WAS
COMPRISED OF EUROPEAN FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS,
TEN OF WHOM SPLIT OFF AND WENT SOUTH TO SURVEY DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS IN SAIGON AREA. EISENBERG SAID NEGOTIATIONS ON
NUMBER OF PROJECTS ARE UNDER DISCUSSION WITH THE SRV IN-
CLUDING PORT CONSTRUCTION, CHEMICAL PLANTS AND RAIL SYSTEM
RENOVATION.

2. YOU WILL RECALL THAT EISENBERG IN PAST MEETINGS WITH BOB
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OAKLEY AND EA/VLC HAS PORTRAYED HIMSELF AS AMBASSADOR OF
COMMERCIAL GOODWILL BETWEEN U.S. AND VIETNAM AND HAS IN-
DICATED DESIRE TO CONVEY MESSAGES WHICH MIGHT SPEED NORMALI-
ZATION. HE HAS ALSO TRIED TO ELICIT SOME SORT OF "ASSUR-
ANCE" THAT USG WOULD SUPPORT VIGOROUS U.S. BUSINESS ACTIVITY
IN VIETNAM ONCE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED, THAT
THIS WOULD INCLUDE INVESTMENT GUARANTEES AND EVEN HUMANI-

TARIAN AID. WE HAVE STEADFASTLY DECLINED SUCH OFFERS,

EXPLAINING REPEATEDLY USG POSITION ON NORMALIZATION AND THE EMBARGO. FRED BROWN DID SO AGAIN MAY 22.

3. EISENBERG, HOWEVER, BROUGHT WITH HIM THIS TIME WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A "SPECIAL MESSAGE" FROM HIS THREE HOUR CONVERSATION WITH NGUYEN CO THACH (EISENBERG ALSO MET PHAM VAN DONG FOR 30 MINUTES). EISENBERG SAID HE TOOK THACH TO TASK FOR TRYING TO USE MIA ISSUE AS POLITICAL LEVER AGAINST U.S. AND "MAKING CAPITAL OUT OF DEAD PEOPLE." HE SAID HE URGED THACH TO TAKE MORE HUMANITARIAN APPROACH, WHICH WOULD STRIKE RESPONSIVE CHORD AMONG U.S. PUBLIC, BY FOR EXAMPLE MAKING GOOD ON VISIT TO HAWAII CIL AS HAD BEEN ARRANGED IN DECEMBER MEETING. ACCORDING TO EISENBERG, THACH REPLIED AS FOLLOWS: "YOU MAY TELL THE AMERICANS THAT ANYTIME THEY WISH, WE (THE SRV) ARE PREPARED TO SEND OUR SPECIALISTS TEAM TO HAWAII. YOU MAY TELL THEM THAT I ASKED YOU TO CONVEY THIS MESSAGE TO THEM. IF THEY WANT TO GO AHEAD WITH THE VISIT, WE ARE READY."

4. AFTER RECOUNTING HIS CONVERSATION WITH THACH (WHICH HE CLAIMED WAS SOLE PURPOSE OF WASHINGTON STOPOVER), EISENBERG SAID HE WOULD CONVEY USG REACTION TO THE SRV, POSSIBLY THROUGH PERSONAL CALL ON SRV AMBASSADOR SUNG IN PARIS. BROWN THANKED EISENBERG FOR "MESSAGE", SAID HE WOULD PASS
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IT ON TO PROPER QUARTER, BUT DECLINED TO TAKE UP EISENBERG'S OFFER. BROWN SAID THAT VIETNAMESE WERE FULLY AWARE OF OUR POSITION ON CIL VISIT, THAT WE HAD NEVER WITHDRAWN CIL INVITATION, AND THAT WE WOULD REFLECT ON THACH'S REMARKS.

5. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT EISENBERG IS TRYING TO INSERT HIMSELF (FOR EVENTUAL COMMERCIAL REASONS) INTO THE NORMALIZATION EQUATION AS UNOFFICIAL MESSENGER AND THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE DELIGHTED TO PLAY HIS GAME, WHICH COMPLEMENTS THEIR OTHER GAMBITS TO UNDERCUT EMBARGO. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO POLITELY TURN DOWN EISENBERG'S ENERGETIC OFFERS. AT THE SAME TIME, IF EISENBERG'S ACCOUNT IS ANYWHERE NEAR ACCURATE, THACH'S WORDS WOULD SEEM TO BE CONFIRMATION THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE READY TO GO AHEAD WITH THE CIL VISIT IF AN ACCEPTABLE MEANS CAN BE FOUND TO ARRANGE TIMING.

6. WE ARE RECEIVING INCREASING NUMBER OF INDIRECT SIGNALS INDICATING POSSIBLE SRV DESIRE REACTIVATE CONTACTS WITH USG. FRED BROWN, KEN QUINN AND I ARE REVIEWING WHAT ACTION WE MIGHT TAKE IN RESPONSE BUT WILL TAKE NO ACTION UNTIL WE HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO REVIEW ENTIRE ISSUE WITH YOU

IN LIGHT OF RECENT EVENTS, INCLUDING YOUR PRESENT TRIP. CHRISTOPHER

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